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Assessing the Correlation between Gamification Intensity and Brand Loyalty in Young Adult Demographics

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ABSTRACT

As the marketplace goes digital and competition intensifies, gamification has become a tactic for diverting people's interest and brand loyalty. The research examines the intensity, complexity, frequency, and immersiveness of specific gamified brand experiences, as well as their relationship to brand loyalty among respondents aged 18-35 in the Philippines. A quantitative correlational research design was employed in this study to collect data from 201 respondents via structured online surveys. The study measured perceived gamification intensity as well as indicators of brand loyalty such as repurchase intention, emotional attachment, and brand advocacy. The results established a strong positive correlation ($r = 0.81$) between the increased levels of gamification intensity and the decreased purchase intention. It was concluded that the youth are the most attracted to scores; collect, badges, and regular content updates particularly points collection, badges, and the regular content updates. The insights derived from this emphasize the power of game of designs that incorporate both behavioral and attitudinal loyalty. This research gives practical recommendations to marketers for the use of digital contexts to achieve optimization of consumer engagement and loyalty, while it also adds the empirical data necessary for the development of gamification discussions in emerging markets.

INTRODUCTION

Background of the Study

The Philippines is witnessing a deep digital transformation that is mainly driven by an increase in smartphone users, the cheap availability of mobile data, and the push of e-commerce ecosystems. The economy is expected to switch to a digital one, and the latest statistics suggest just that. As of 2024, the digital economy of the area is now ₱2.25 trillion with an 8.5% contribution to the national GDP from the previous year, where the amount was only ₱1.87 trillion, representing a significant leap (Cordero, 2025). This revelatory increase was largely due to the fast gain of the e-commerce industry by 19.6% in 2024 alone, which was valued at roughly ₱1.3 trillion (Blakey & Blakey, 2024). The Philippines is one of the leading digital-adoption countries in ASEAN region as of now. The total users of the internet have reached a saturation of 73.6% or approximately 86.98 million individuals (Howe, 2024). The boom in connections has changed the dynamics between brands and consumers, mainly in urban areas, and adolescent-run segments.

Generation Z is among the major factors pushing this total operation to the digital space. The population of these people is around 30% of the totality of the nation, namely, those who were born in the period from 1997 to 2012 in the Philippines. This demographic has been brought up in a digital world fully furnished with what the modern man needs. Being easily available to them, digital contents and applications have made them highly receptive to them. In the Philippines, the average Gen Z consumer makes about six online purchases per month

and some of them buy even more-- up to ten (Liamzon & Liamzon, 2024). Psychological pleasure and the phenomenon of self-gratification are in the forefront guiding the consumers. Hence, 75% of the surveyed Gen Z people reported that they shop online to "treat themselves" (Mioten, 2024). Moreover, this generation persuasively is spending about 5.5 hours per day on social media platforms with interactive, visually happy and personalized content (Purple Bug, 2024). This is different than the product-oriented utility that the self-expression factor brings; this is a consumer outlook, which is experiential and additive at the same time. Therefore, it's clear that they are not only pragmatic but also hedonistic when it comes to their forethought.

Brands, on the other hand, are responding to these new-form trends through the implementation of gamification strategies for the purpose of having an increase in customer engagement, loyalty, and long product lifetimes (Tran, 2024). Gamification is the phenomenon of applying the same principles in the game as in a different context - such as a business. It exploits the inner needs of individuals divided into three, namely, achievement, competition, and reward. This model has its predominant example in the e-commerce sector, while fintech, and loyalty programs, have also been used avowedly in promoting it. To illustrate, cashback platforms have carried out gamification of challenges and daily streaks to persuade users to spend more and keep using the platform. Apps like Shopee and GCash are offering games like "Spin-the-Wheel," "Check-in Bonuses," and "Reward Trees," which in turn will not only increase the app engagement but also

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deepen the user-brand interaction. Evidence from various studies, for example the investigation of Caponpon *et al.* (2023), has confirmed that the presence of gamified elements leads to a major uplift in user experience, which ultimately brings more sales and brand advocacy.

Nonetheless, even if gamification has gained widespread traction, there is still a notable shortfall in the understanding of its impact on brand loyalty, especially within the Philippine market. The attention of most of the studies is focused on the existing gamification just in terms of the presence or absence of modes, thus, the intensity, complexity, and immersiveness are not analyzed. The interrelation between dimensions like the ones above and the other aspects of brand loyalty like repurchase behavior, emotional attachment, and brand advocacy are not explored sufficiently either, especially in the case of the Gen Z consumers. A question arises whether the shift towards increased technology immersion in this particular generation will create differences in relation to the execution of such schemes, hence, it should be analyzed that, whether by presenting deeper and more dynamic gamification viewers form a bond over time. The present paper is intended to be a fill-up for these explorations by the study of the relation between the gamification intensity and brand loyalty of the young Filipino adults and the issuance of practical proofs for the academic and real market use.

Statement of the Problem

Incorporating gamification in marketing strategies has turned into popular practice, and brands have started to apply game elements technically to develop consumer engagement and retention. Nonetheless, in spite of its high popularity, there are only a few studies dealing with the empirical proof for the direct interplay between gamification intensity--which means the amount of the user's choice of game is gamified because it has elements of the game and the user experiences it--and brand loyalty, primarily that of the youth.

Most of the previous investigations have covered gamification as a general solution; however, the matter of finding out how the degree or intensity of gamification contributes to long-term consumer loyalty has been largely neglected. There is a pivotal question, whether by increasing the gaps, the perception of higher gamified materials is more favorable and leads to growth in stockholder prosperity or, on the contrary, the initial assertion of impairing the technology prevails. Furthermore, there remains an issue of identifying the specific game elements (e.g., rewards, competition, challenges) that really help build strong brand loyalty.

Thus, this study aims to address the following research questions:

1. Do demographic factors influence the correlation between gamification intensity and brand loyalty?
2. What specific gamification features are most effective in fostering brand loyalty?
3. Is there a threshold or diminishing return where

excessive gamification reduces its effectiveness in maintaining consumer engagement?

4. Does gamification intensity impact brand loyalty among young adults?

Significance of the Study

This research provides valuable insights into the correlation between gamification intensity and brand loyalty among young adults. The findings of this study have significance for the following:

Consumers. The studied results are valuable for young adult consumers since they state how gamification touches their relations (engagement and loyalty) to brands. Getting acquainted with the effects will help consumers to make correct decisions about brands with which they will interact and support.

Marketers and Businesses. People whose work is closely connected with the marketing field, as well as the ones who own a business will be able to take the data in the research to improvise their gamification strategies. The knowledge of the most influential game cards that are making a brand stick in customers' minds could help ventures develop their engagement, upgrade loyalty schemes, and boost the overall corporate image.

Academia and Scholars. The academic world and the students who are interested in marketing, consumer behavior, or digital engagement, can get reference points from this study for further studies. The research, which has added some more to the literature on gamification, presents factual proof regarding the support of this practice in the development of brand loyalty, especially for the youth.

Future Researchers. The study acts as an inspiration for future researchers who want to expand their ventures on game strategies and how they affect customer behavior. The findings will be used as lessons for comparative studies, experimental research, or more detailed and complex analyses in other populace and industry sectors.

Scope and Delimitation

The present study will be aiming at the exploration of the relationship between gamification intensity and brand loyalty in the context of young adults in the Philippines. Its primary goal will be to explore how different levels of gamification in brand engagement affect consumer loyalty as well as which gamification elements are most effective in establishing a long-term emotional connection with the brand. The study will particularly focus on the demographic group of young adults, fallings in age by 18-35, who are the main recipients of gamified brand experiences and digital marketing strategies.

For this research, a quantitative approach will be applied through an online survey which will be distributed to the Filipino respondents who have interacted with gamified brand experiences, such as loyalty programs, reward systems, and mobile applications that feature game-like elements. The study will investigate on the consumer perceptions, engagement levels, and purchasing behaviors

along with the gamification strategies that have been discussed in the previous chapter.

In spite of the above provisions, a number of delimitations exist in the present study: First, the research is confined to respondents located in the Philippines, thus, the results may not be applicable to other countries, where the cultures and economies differ significantly. Also, it is worth noting that just young adults aged 18 to 35 will be participating in the study, while other age groups that may view gamification and brand loyalty differently will be left out. Furthermore, the project will be centered on the gamification of consumer brands marketing strategies, i.e. in retail, online shopping, and mobile apps, and will not include gamification applied in education, workplace, or non-commercial uses. The study also relies on self-reported survey responses which are prone to some biases like social desirability bias and recall inaccuracies. Despite the limitations, the study aims at providing insightful inputs to marketers, business people, and researchers as to the effectiveness of gamification strategies in attaining brand allegiance in young adults in the Philippines.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Marketing through gamification is the intentional implementation of particular game mechanics—like points, badges, leaderboards, and challenges—in non-game settings to promote customer engagement and motivation. The strategy relies on principles of behavioral psychology, which facilitate brand interaction, loyalty, and conversion by making marketing experience more fun and rewarding (Santos *et al.*, 2024).

In the last decade, gamification has been a key instrument in digital marketing, especially for the brands that want to capture the attention of the young, tech-driven consumers. Global players have managed to assimilate gamification into their marketing approach. To illustrate, Nike’s Run Club app is popular with features like achievement badges, leaderboards, and social challenges that hikers are motivated by and they are also the causes of a fitness community (Steele, 2023). In a similar trend, Starbucks incorporated gamification into its rewards program through the innovative games such as “Starbucks Pairs” and “Starbucks Bingo,” which the company believes will increase repurchase and customer loyalty (Mathilde, 2023).

In the Philippines, the increasing acceptance of gamification is evident in most flagship brands. Shopee, the most prominent e-commerce player, on the one hand, has positioned itself by deploying an in-app game, “Shopee Shake”, and “Shopee Farm” to elevate users’ engagement and sales (Affifa, 2024). The SM Advantage Card (SMAC), a SM Retail loyalty program, offers customers points for purchases that could be redeemed for discounts and exclusive offers, promoting customer retention (Bilyonaryo, 2023). GCash, the number one mobile wallet in The Philippines, introduced the gamified scheme of “GCash Forest,” where users earn points for every eco-friendly transaction which promotes user engagement and environmental consciousness at once (BrandRap Team, 2024). Besides that, Lazada, another famous e-commerce platform, also applied gamification through features including daily check-ins, mini-games, and collectible vouchers which encourage frequent app usage and customer loyalty (McDowell, 2023).

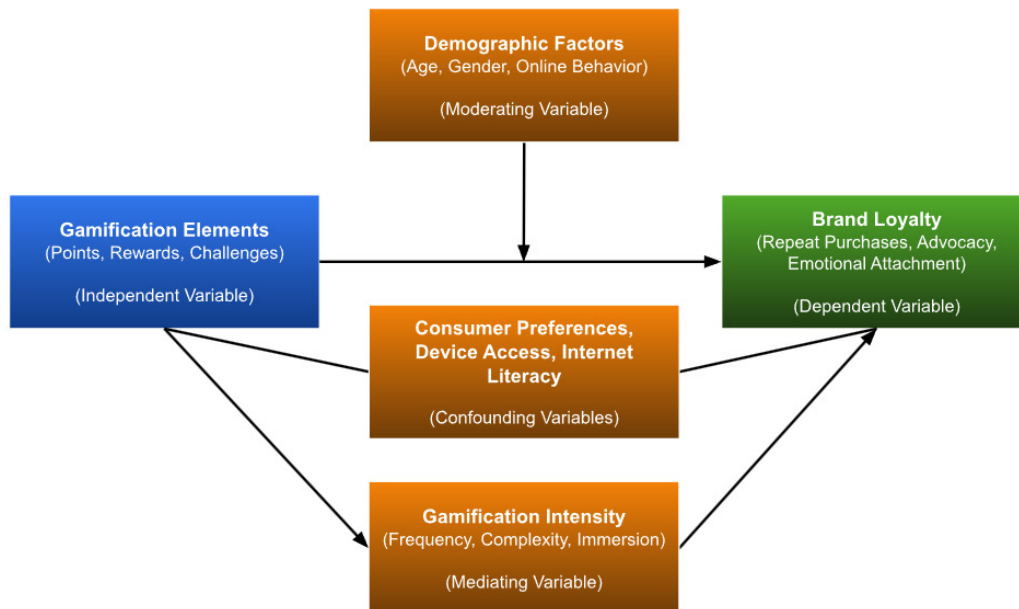


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

Theoretical Foundations of Gamification and Brand Loyalty

The foundation of Self-Determination Theory (SDT)

is by Deci and Ryan, which states that human wants are driven by the fulfillment of the three basic psychological needs, namely, autonomy, competence, and relatedness.

In marketing, SDT has played a vital influential position in understanding how customers behave, especially in terms of intrinsic and extrinsic motivations that will guide customers on which purchases to make. Zeroing in on the Western studies, the SDT has been used as a framework to inquire into consumer engagement and the like, which is human-centered, paradigm distribution marketing strategies of psychologically aligned marketing (Cassia & Magno, 2023).

Flow Theory elucidates an ideal state of optimal functioning and complete absorption in an activity (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990), as in the case of marketing, flow state induction can lead to higher levels of customer involvement and retention. Globally, this is true because brands have managed to use this flow theory in a clever way by creating engaging loyalty programs which, in turn, enthrall customers. Nike Run Club app offers real-time tracking and community challenges to the participants of Squats which makes it possible for the people to introduce themselves to the flow state during their fitness journey eventually, thereby becoming loyal to the brand. Oliver's model of brand loyalty is characteristically two-fold, involving behavioral loyalty and attitudinal loyalty as its respective components. Behavioral loyalty refers to a repeated purchasing pattern, while attitudinal loyalty is the emotional bond and consumers' level of commitment to a brand. This kind of distinction is essential in the analysis of the extent of customer loyalty. Behavioral loyalty can appear because of convenience or habit but attitudinal loyalty suggests a stronger, and more, long-lasting bond with respect to the brand (Erdoğan & Çiçek, 2012).

Gamification Strategies and Their Components

Gamification mechanics are the basic architectures that transmute the non-game space into a game-like environment by adding a system of games. These mechanics are proposed to be persuasive, reward targeted behavior, and improve the overall experience. Mechanics of gamification, adjustments of rewards, and the acquisition of resources such as turning in a ticket and winning are some of the major tools that can motivate customers to talk about it (Kanazawa, 2022).

In the Western markets, gamification strategies frequently take the competition approach to drive user engagement. Fitness applications like Strava, Fitbit, and Peloton add leaderboards and competitive challenges to drive users to be better than their friends. Social comparison theory and the competitive instinct have been employed by these platforms to ascertain that users continue with their service for a longer time (InsightTrendsWorld, 2025). For instance, the fact that Peloton comes with live classes showing real-time leaderboards, users will be encouraged to struggle harder thus they can improve their data and at the same time increased intensity in workout frequency. This use of competition as a motivational factor is only possible where the desire for social recognition and achievement is one of the most effective motivators in individualistic cultures (Frederick, 2023).

In contrast, Southeast Asian markets, including the Philippines, have been observed to be fans of gamification strategies that evolve around rewards and are simple. E-commerce platforms like Shopee and Lazada apply features such as "Spin the Wheel" games, daily check-ins, and straightforward point-accumulation systems to engage users (Kedia, 2025). With these gamified elements, the players can avail of the immediate gratification and they are conceivably easy to use because of the lack of technicalities, thus they can be accessible to a wider user population. To exemplify, in the case of the "Shopee Shake" game, this platform allows people to earn coins by simply shaking their phones during a specific time, and those coins can then be redeemed for discounts. This type of feature is important when the users are more for cash incentives or when it needs to be convenient for the user to adopt it (Bulu & Natalia, 2024).

The importance of cultural differences is highlighted by the design and the effectiveness of gamification strategies. In the case of Western consumers who are typically known for their individualism culture, they are more prone to being motivated by personal achievement, competition, and status recognition. For this reason, the gamification elements that focus on individual performance, such as leaderboards and badges, prove to be particularly effective in these markets. On the contrary, Southeast Asian consumers, including Filipinos, tend to exhibit collectivist cultural traits that value community, harmony, and group achievements more. This is why the gamified tools in these areas are more effective if they lean toward bringing to life the collaborative elements, the communal of the reward and the social sharing features. Furthermore, the inclination towards simplicity long with the instant reward of simplicity is in tune with the cultural pre-eminence of the practical benefits and user-friendliness.

Conceptual Gap in Gamification Intensity

Gamification is indeed a concept that has been embraced in different sectors, but the phrase "gamification intensity" is one that has not been sufficiently explored. Gamification intensity concerns the level of game mechanics embedded in a system, determining such aspects as, for example, light, moderate, or heavy game element exposure, simple versus complex gaming mechanics, and the fun and wide-ranging experience of the game. This dimension is pertinent since it introduces a new aspect that differs from the mere presence of game elements, thus reflecting the user's experiences of interacting with game-like features or fiction machinery catches the user's attention; some might have mystical qualities or special effects that are considered appealing to users (Kraht *et al.*, 2021).

The current body of research on gamification is mostly about the presence or absence of gamified elements, treating gamification rather like a binary variable. Thus, it ignores the myriad interactions that different levels of gamification can cause. One study that has really

shed the light on this topic is a research work done by Bohné *et al.* (2023), which is focused on the different intensities of gamification in virtual training. Specifically, the presence of a high gamification intensity corresponds to the learning results being better while the complexity and, therefore, depth of gamified elements become a significant factor in user engagement and effectiveness. However, there is the necessity of applying well-structured plans for examining and assessing the intensity of gamification. The coalescence of different levels of gamification intensity along with users' behavior and outcomes in different contexts merits more empirical scrutiny.

As for the Philippines, gamification has been adopted heavily in e-commerce, banking, and education. Shopee and GCash are examples of platforms that have integrated gamification as a technique to sustain customer engagement. Nonetheless, there seems to be no local studies that look at the thickness of these gamified elements. In particular, the literature is sparse on issuing a summary about the interplay between the frequency of gamified interactions, the complexity of game mechanics, and the immersiveness of the user experience concerning consumer behavior and brand loyalty among Filipino users.

Gamification and Consumer Behavior

Gamification can now be used to develop consumer behavior by improving engagement, making consumers feel they are taking part in the decision-making process, and even through the evocation of some type of emotion. By imbuing gameful elements to experience outside of everyday life, businesses want to convey an impression of liveliness and sense of achievement to customers. Furthermore, gamified systems fulfill basic psychological needs—competence, autonomy, and relatedness—thus increasing user engagement. For instance, if any one of the functions of challenges, feedback mechanisms, and rewards causes an increase in user satisfaction then high levels of user engagement will be sustained such as the platform (Bitrián *et al.*, 2021). Additionally, the emotions of the consumers also improve as a result of gamification which has a say in their decisions. The presence of perks and symbolism of success can steer customers in the right direction, such as to buy a product or to try something new (Tobon *et al.*, 2019). Gamified that kind of product features can create enjoyable and exciting experiences which, in turn, are essential to positive attitudes' development toward the brand. These emotional reactions can, as a result, change the customers' view of the brand positively and increase their chances of returning (Habachi *et al.*, 2023).

In the Philippines, the customers are more attracted to the gamification strategies that are simple yet offer more value. Like Shopee that has very nice implementation of gamified features including “Shopee Shake” and “Shopee Farm” that users liked as they get rewards and incentives right away. A research study on the “Shopee Cocoki”

game found that a higher intensity of gamification had a strong positive effect on customer engagement and loyalty (Putri & Rinova, 2024).

On a global scale, the association of gamification with impulse buying has been a remarkable one, particularly in e-commerce settings. The elements of games such as point systems, limited-time offers, and interactive challenges produce a sense of both urgency and excitement, making people buy things they did not originally plan on purchasing. The literature has demonstrated that immersive activities, through gamification, promote perceived enjoyment and boost socialization, which in turn are both positively related to impulse buying behavior. Furthermore, in their findings, the researchers include the idea that the immersive experience due to gamified environments shifts the target focus from unplanned distributions to consumer promotion (Gao & Zhao, 2023).

Brand Loyalty Outcomes from Gamification

Gamification is a known approach that is effective to positively impact the major brand loyalty variables such as Net Promoter Score (NPS), intention for repeat purchases, and emotional commitment. Therefore, integrating game-like elements into a marketing plan is a way for brands to approach customer engagement and deepening relationships effectively.

Among other things, the most important Net Promoter Score (NPS), a metric that indicates a customer's satisfaction and loyalty by asking customers how likely they are to recommend a brand, is positively affected by the experiences that are gamified. Gamification strategies that utilize challenges, rewards, and the interactive elements can facilitate positive customer experiences and in this way, increase NPS rankings. For example, a research result by Harwood and Garry (2015) showed that the gamification of elements is the stimulus for positive emotions, and as a result, it increases brand engagement and loyalty.

The repurchase intentions are also influenced by gamification. Engaging with customers and offering attractive rewards, is one way for gamified marketing to stimulate repeat purchases. A study shows that gamification in loyalty schemes has a significant positive impact on e-customer loyalty and the perceived value which in turn affects the repurchase behavior.

Emotional commitment to a brand can be stiffer through the creation of gamification of the brand by playful and interactive experiences that customers admire. The excitement of completing the level and joining a group are the outcomes of gamified elements that will increase the bond between the customer and the brand at the emotional level. A research study on the relationship between gamification and brand equity, found that non-linear brand engagement is positively related to the brand equity (Xi & Hamari, 2020).

In the Philippines, the episode of gamification through the variables focus on the short term of engagement

and transactional loyalty. e-commerce and payment platforms such as Shopee and GCash, have adopted gamified features such as daily check-ins and mini-games to increase user engagement. These strategies are very effective in increasing user activity and purchases but they focus mainly on immediate rewards rather than on long-term brand loyalty. This implies that although short-term engagement can be boosted by gamification, more strategies would be needed to shape consumers' long-standing emotional commitment of Filipinos.

Focus on Young Adults as Digital Natives

Millennials (1981–1996) and Generation Z (1997–2012) are predominantly characterized as digital natives based on their technology upbringing and environmental interaction. The presence of the internet and mobile technology was alongside the common use of digital technologies by millennials as they were growing and learning. Gen Z, on the other hand, was surrounded by digital technology starting from the moment they were born and they have a more intuitive integrated approach to utilizing digital platforms. The millennials and Generation Z have great digital literacy skills, but the latter stands out with their engagement with visual and interactive content, thus preferring platforms such as TikTok and Instagram to traditional media. This shift demands corresponding marketing strategies that would be based on interactive and gamified content that could catch the attention of these particular audiences (MSS Media, Inc, 2023).

Across the globe, young adults have different digital behaviors shaped by cultural and economic factors. Gen Z in the Philippines is a more mobile-oriented generation that mainly uses their smartphones for access to the internet. This mobile-first approach reinforces the need to optimize digital content for mobile platforms when targeting the audience. In addition, the young Filipino Gen Z consumers are very price-conscious and they often opt for cheap yet value-for-money choices, which becomes their priority in product buying. This is different from their counterparts worldwide, some of whom might focus on brand prestige or exclusivity most of the time. Hence, the students' understanding of their peers' preferences can lead to the development of effective marketing strategies by promoting businesses that sell affordable products (Thim, 2025).

The cultural dimensions are also important regarding the effectiveness of gamified marketing. In countries that belong to a collectivist culture like the Philippines, it is common for consumers to prioritize community involvement and harmony. Therefore, gamification elements that support collaboration and collective success are more likely adopted than those that are revolving around competition among individuals. Conversely, individualistic cultures can resonate better with gamification that concerns one's achievement and rivalry. Acknowledgment and adoption of these issues in gamified marketing can be a great instrument for increasing consumers' engagement together with their brand loyalty in different markets (Wu *et al.*, 2022).

Research Gap

Despite the fact that an increasing number of academic works on gamification and its impact on consumer behavior are published and that they are gaining popularity, research works expressing the relationship between the length of gamification and the consequent brand loyalty are being overlooked, especially among young adult consumers in emerging markets like the Philippines. The prevalent studies mostly do not perform an in-depth exploration of gamification in a particular way, where it is, either available or not; without discussing how different degrees of gamification of complexity, frequency, and immersiveness affect the consumer loyalty outcomes (Bohné *et al.*, 2023; Krath *et al.*, 2021). Furthermore, most of the empirical studies have been performed in Western countries where the purchasing behavior and cultural impulses are really different from those in Southeast Asia. In the Philippine market however; there are several brands including Shopee, GCash, and Lazada that have successfully adopted gamification strategies, but their issues of local academic inquiries remain slight especially those with measures like the intensity of gamification across the behavioral (e.g., repurchase) and the attitudinal (e.g., emotional connection) loyalty indicators. There is still the need for an exploration of the impact of the gamification saturation or fatigue, which poses the question of the actual point where gamification is no longer effective. This study is going to fill in those gaps since it is going to supply quantitative evidence on the effects of the different intensities of gamification on brand loyalty in a young Filipino adults population as digital natives who are particularly value-conscious i.e. people aged 18-35.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Research Design

This study was structured as a correlational research study utilizing a quantitative research design. The objective was to explore the relationship between the level of gamification and brand loyalty among young adults in the Philippines. The quantitative method allowed for the objective measurement and statistical analysis of numerical data, enabling identification of patterns and correlations between variables. A correlational design was appropriate for this study because it aimed to evaluate both the strength and direction of the relationship between gamification intensity and consumer brand loyalty. Data was collected using a structured online questionnaire targeting Filipino consumers aged 18–35 years who had experience with gamified brand programs. The instrument measured gamification-related variables—such as engagement frequency, perceived enjoyment, and immersion—alongside brand loyalty indicators, including repurchase intentions, advocacy, and emotional attachment. The use of online surveys facilitated a wider reach within the target demographic, ensured efficient data collection, and provided a practical method for analyzing consumer behavior in a digital context.

The Respondents

The target population for this study consisted of young adults aged 18 to 35 residing in the Philippines who have previously interacted with gamified brand experiences. This demographic was selected due to their high engagement with digital platforms and relevance to gamified marketing strategies. To identify and recruit appropriate participants, the study employed a purposive random sampling technique. This method allowed researchers to intentionally select individuals who met key inclusion criteria—specifically, those who fell within the age bracket and had prior exposure to gamified brand programs—while incorporating random distribution in the online invitation process to reduce selection bias. Given the strong digital presence of young Filipinos, social media platforms such as Facebook and online communities relevant to consumer brands were utilized as primary channels for distributing the survey. This approach ensured access to a concentrated population of tech-savvy individuals, increasing the likelihood of capturing responses from participants familiar with gamification in brand engagement.

The Instrument

To get the relevant data, this research will undertake the use of structured survey questionnaires that would be composed of four parts:

Section 1

Demographic Information. This part will cover demographic data such as: Age, Gender, Location, Occupation.

Section 2

Engagement with gamified brand experiences. The purpose of this section is to ascertain the degree of interaction the respondents had with the brand elements in the process of gamification, particularly focusing on: The frequency of participation, Types, and Duration of gamified elements experienced.

Section 3

Perceived Gamification Intensity. This section will measure the respondents’ assessments of the strength of the gamification in their brand interactions for example: How complex the gamified features are, the immersiveness of their experience, the frequency of updates and the introduction of new challenges.

Section 4

Brand Loyalty Indicators. The brand loyalty indicators such as: Repurchase Intentions, Willingness to

Recommend, Emotional Attachment are the measures of the level of loyalty that the respondents feel to the brands that have used gamification.

A 5-point Likert scale will be utilized throughout Sections 2 to 4, allowing respondents to indicate their level of agreement or frequency, ranging from “Strongly Disagree” (1) to “Strongly Agree” (5) or “Never” (1) to “Always” (5). This scaling method provides a quantitative measure to analyze the relationship between the intensity of gamification and brand loyalty. The questionnaire will be framed on existing validated instruments and modified to reflect the specific context of gamification and brand loyalty. A pilot test will be conducted to ensure the clarity, reliability, and validity of the questions prior to their distribution.

Data Collection Procedure

For this study, the data collection will be done through a structured online survey aimed at young adults aged 18 to 35 who have engaged with gamified brand experiences. The survey will be conducted through a reputable online survey platform so as to ensure the availability of the survey and the ease of use for the respondents. To reach the broad range and to have a representative sample, different digital channels like social media, email lists, and online communities where the likely target demographic resides, will be used to invite people to participate. The survey will undergo a pilot test wherein a small number of the target population will be asked to fill it to identify and fix any issues related with question clarity, technical functionality and overall user experience. Feedback arising from the pilot phase will be instrumental for effecting the necessary adjustments to the survey instrument. The Administration of the structured online survey will take place on a trusted platform, which will be straightforward and user-friendly for the subjects. Once the questionnaire is finalized, due to the timeframe, the data collection will be finished on the specified period during which all responses will be checked for the quality and completeness of data. Furthermore, the survey process will be improved by reminders which will target those who have not yet completed the survey. Participation will be voluntary, and all respondents will be assured of anonymity and confidentiality. The collected data will be secured and will undergo the preliminary check for completeness and consistency. Any incomplete or inconsistent responses will be excluded from the analysis in order to maintain the integrity of the data. The systematic approach in data collection will ensure that the data obtained are reliable and valid concerning the association between gamification intensity and brand loyalty among the young adults in the Philippines.

Table 1: Likert Scale Chart

Scale	1	2	3	4	5
Verbal Interpretation	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Range	4.21-5.00	3.41-4.20	2.61-3.40	1.81-2.60	1.00-1.80

Additionally, a Likert scale was administered in the survey to capture respondents' attitudes, as presented in Table 1. The assembled data provided a basis to find the statistical significance of relationships between certain variables. The results from the analysis were fundamental in discriminating whether any of the variables under scrutiny had substantial associations or were intertwined. The use of descriptive statistics and analyses of the overall data allowed the investigation to display a full picture of respondents' opinions, and to discover possible relationships that may exist.

Data Analysis Plan

The study will be analyzing the data collected through a series of clearly structured steps designed to assess the relationship between gamification intensity and brand loyalty among young adults in the Philippines. The first stage will involve the use of descriptive statistics to summarize the respondents' demographic characteristics while providing a snapshot of their experience with gamified brand experiences. This summary will include standard measures of central tendency and dispersion such as means, frequencies, and standard deviations.

The next stage will see the study using correlational analysis to determine both the intensity and the brand loyalty correlate. The Pearson correlation coefficient will be utilized to find out the extent of linear correlation of the two variable which is this analysis is useful for. Understanding how the respondents' changes in gamification intensity is reflected in brand loyalty levels is the goal of this statistical method.

In order to find out if gamification intensity is a predictor of brand loyalty, a regression analysis will be carried out. This statistical technique facilitates the estimation of the joint effect of the variables on brand loyalty including the effect of gamification intensity. The regression allows the introduction of covariates to account for potential confounding variables so that the effect of gamification intensity on brand loyalty can be isolated.

All data analysis procedures will be performed with SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) software program that provides a wide collection of tools required for managing and handling complex datasets. The actual data analysis will first involve data cleansing which will be carefully done by addressing potential issues related to missing cases and outliers. Normality, linearity, and homoscedasticity are the assumptions of each statistical test; thus these will be evaluated in order to establish the accuracy of the findings.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

Research Problem No.1: Do Demographic Factors Influence the Correlation between Gamification Intensity and Brand Loyalty?

Understanding the demographics is key because it sheds light on the findings and shows whether the insights can be generalized to the whole young adult population.

Table 2: Distribution of Respondents According to Sex

Sex	Frequency	Percentage	Rank
Male	137	68.2%	1
Female	62	30.8%	2
Prefer Not To Say	2	1%	3

As illustrated in Table 2, males were more prevalent in the sample of 201 participants as they account for 137 (68.2% of the sample) while 62 females (30.8%), and 2 (1%) did not specify their gender. The result shows that males are more represented than females in the study, which might be the case we see gender differences in accessibility to the interactive in-brand marketing. This observation notwithstanding-female respondents also represented a sizeable part of the group and have contributed valuable insights for gender-based comparisons.

Table 3: Distribution of Respondents According to Age

Age	Frequency	Percentage	Rank
18-22	121	60.2%	1
23-27	29	14.4%	3
28-32	10	5%	4
33-35	41	20.4%	2

Table 3 indicates that most of the respondents (121 out of 201, 60.2%) belong to the age group of 18-22 years, followed by 33-35 years (41 respondents, 20.4%), 23-27 years (14.4%), and 28-32 (5%). Thus, the result shows that not only are young adults the primary participants in games but they also feel somewhat less qualified and outdated compared to the transitory adolescents. The presence of older ages makes it possible to get a wider insight on how preferences could change within the range of young adults.

Table 4: Distribution of Respondents According to Location

Location	Frequency	Percentage	Rank
Metro Manila (NCR)	188	93.5%	1
Luzon (Outside NCR)	11	5.5%	2
Visayas	1	0.5%	3
Mindanao	1	0.5%	3

Table 4 shows that the majority of the respondents (188; 93.5%) are from Metro Manila (NCR), with only 11 (5.5%) from other parts of Luzon and 3 respondents from Visayas and Mindanao. This implies that gamified brand experiences are more common and accessible in metropolitan areas rather than in less populated regions, which is what the data suggests. Future studies should explore alternative regional patterns to understand and compare this phenomenon better.

Table 5 shows that 127 participants (63.2%) are students while 32 (15.9%) were self-employed, 31 (15.4%) are

Table 5: Distribution of Respondents According to Employment Status

Employment Status	Frequency	Percentage	Rank
Student	127	63.2%	1
Employed (Full-time)	31	15.4%	3
Employed (Part-time)	3	1.5%	5
Self-employed	32	15.9%	2
Unemployed	8	4%	4

employed full time, and the rest either part time or unemployed. The predominance of students suggests the data has been collected from a digital-native, cost-conscious group that is highly interested in reward-driven activities. Employed individuals' presence further provides diversity by demonstrating that purchasing power holders also tend to participate in rewarding behaviors of the brand.

Table 6: Distribution of Respondents According to Their Industry

Industry	Frequency	Percentage	Rank
Retail/ E-commerce	35	17.9%	2
IT/ Technology	12	6.1%	6
Banking/ Finance	18	9.2%	5
Media/ Marketing	24	12.2%	4
Education	30	15.3%	3
Other Industries	77	39.3%	1

Table 6 indicates that out of 77 respondents (39.3%) who represent different industries, Retail/E-commerce was the second most (17.9%) and Education (15.3%) respectively. The connection between retail, media and gamification is obvious, so these findings are specifically relevant. The different sectors ensure that the results are useful for a broad spectrum of the market.

Research Problem No.2: What Specific Gamification Features are Most Effective in Fostering Brand Loyalty?

In this section, we will see how abdominal respondents are with gamification to track their involvement and loyalty subsequent.

Table 7 shows that more than half of the respondents 117 (58.2%) are "Always" partakers in the gamified brand experiences while 49 (24.4%) of them "Often" do so and only few below 5% of them are rarely or never participating. This reveals a strong sincere interest in gamification among the young adults, and even the majority of them make such experiences a part of their ordinary shopping. The minor number of people who seldom or practically do not use brands could be

Table 7: Distribution of Respondents According to How Often They Participate in Gamified Brand Experiences

Participation	Frequency	Percentage	Rank
Always	117	58.2%	1
Often	49	24.4%	2
Sometimes	25	12.4%	3
Rare	7	3.5%	4
Never	3	1.5%	5

in respect of limited accessibility and preference for the usual brand interactions.

Table 8 illustrates that 136 respondents (67.7%) use Points Collection, the most widespread gamification item while Badges/Achievements (34.3%) and Spin-the-Wheel (29.4%) are the other favorites. This reveals that the simplest and essentially reward-driven systems are most appealing to customers, perhaps due to their simplicity and direct gratification. Leaderboards, more advanced gamification features (15.9%) reported less activity, which indicates a preference for less competitive forms of gamification.

Table 8: Distribution of Respondents According to the Gamification Elements They Typically Engage With

Participation	Frequency	Percentage	Rank
Points Collection	136	67.7%	1
Badges/ Achievements	69	34.3%	2
Leaderboards	32	15.9%	6
Referral or Invite Bonuses	40	19.9%	5
Challenges/ Competitions	45	22.4%	4
Spin-the-Wheel or Lucky Draws	59	29.4%	3

Table 9: Distribution of Respondents According to How Long They Have Been Engaging with Gamified Brand Programs

Engagement	Frequency	Percentage	Rank
Less than 3 months	70	34.8%	1
3 to 6 months	30	14.9%	4
7 months to 1 year	39	19.4%	3
More than 1 year	62	30.8%	2

According to Table 9, 70 respondents (34.8%) had gamified programs for less than 3 months, while 62 (30.8%) had them for more than a year. This makes it clear that taking part in the gamified programs is something which both new users and long-term users appreciate,

with many of them showing a continued interest. The differences in the periods of engagement suggest there are ways for brands to keep and attract both phrases of customers.

Table 10: Distribution of Respondents According to How Long They Have Been Engaging with Gamified Brand Programs

Participation	Frequency	Percentage	Rank
Very Likely	65	32.3%	2
Likely	95	47.3%	1
Neutral	32	15.9%	3
Unlikely	8	4%	4
Very Unlikely	1	0.5%	5

Table 10 reveals 95 respondents (47.3%) saying that they are “Likely” and 65 respondents (32.3%) stating that they will be “Very Likely” to join the new gamified programs, whereas only 9 respondents (4.5%) were found to show a negative attitude. The overall affirmative attitude which nearly every respondent has shown indicates that gamification is one of the major determinants of the

consumer’s decision, which suggests that brands can take further steps to implement the process confidently.

Research Problem No.3: Is There a Threshold or Diminishing Return Where Excessive Gamification Reduces Its Effectiveness in Maintaining Consumer Engagement?

Table 11: Respondent’s Weighted Mean in Terms of Perceived Gamification Intensity

Perceived Gamification Intensity	Mean	SD	Interpretation
The gamified programs I engage with frequently offer new challenges and updates.	4.32	0.72	Strongly agree
I find the gamification features highly immersive and engaging.	4.27	0.72	Strongly agree
The gamified activities feel increasingly complex and rewarding over time.	4.23	0.83	Strongly agree
Gamified brand experiences influence how often I interact with the brand.	4.31	0.75	Strongly agree
I actively seek out brands that offer gamified experiences.	4.24	0.82	Strongly agree
The gamification features motivate me to complete tasks or goals.	4.23	0.73	Strongly agree
I feel challenged in a fun way by the gamified activities.	4.31	0.78	Strongly agree
Overall mean	4.27	0.77	Strongly agree (Very High)

Scale: 4.21-5.00 (SA: Strongly Agree), 3.41-4.20 (A: Agree), 2.61-3.40 (N: Neutral), 1.81-2.60 (D: Disagree), 1.00-1.80 (SD: Strongly Disagree)

Table 11 indicates a mean of 4.27 (SD = 0.77) on the item perceived gamification intensity, with individual item means ranging from 4.23 to 4.32 all in the “Strongly Agree” category which is an aggregate of the respondents’ perception of gamification programs as fulfilling dynamical and motivational. This is underlined by the item “frequent updates and challenges” which the respondents Rarely

answered with a mean of 4.32, showing that bringing in fresh updates keeps the content interesting. The items collectively achieved high scores reflecting the effectiveness of gamified tools in improving users’ interactivity.

Research Problem No.4: Does Gamification Intensity Impact Brand Loyalty among Young Adults?

Table 12: Respondent’s Weighted Mean in Terms of Brand Loyalty Indicators

Brand Loyalty Indicators	Mean	SD	Interpretation
I am more likely to repurchase from brands with engaging gamification features.	4.29	0.76	Strongly agree
Gamification makes me feel emotionally connected to the brand.	4.13	0.81	Agree
I am more likely to recommend brands with fun gamification features to friends.	4.26	0.81	Strongly agree
I feel rewarded and valued by brands with well-designed gamification programs.	4.25	0.75	Strongly agree
Gamified experiences make me prefer one brand over others, even if competitors offer similar products.	4.27	0.71	Strongly agree
I follow or subscribe to brands that use gamified programs.	4.33	0.75	Strongly agree
I feel disappointed when a brand removes gamification features I enjoy.	3.98	0.95	Agree
Overall mean	4.22	0.80	Strongly agree (Very High)

Scale: 4.21-5.00 (SA: Strongly Agree), 3.41-4.20 (A: Agree), 2.61-3.40 (N: Neutral), 1.81-2.60 (D: Disagree), 1.00-1.80 (SD: Strongly Disagree)

Table 12 also provides brand loyalty with an overall mean of 4.22 (SD = 0.80), indicating a very high level of loyalty associated with the gamified experiences. The respondents are the most likely group of people to follow or subscribe to a brand (Mean = 4.33) and make repurchases (Mean = 4.29) thereby showing that gamification naturally leads to recycling of behavior.

Moods like feeling connected (Mean = 4.13) and disappointment when gamification is turned off (3.98) are slightly weaker but still good thus indicating emotive branding strategies can be deeper.

Correlation Between Gamification Intensity and Brand Loyalty

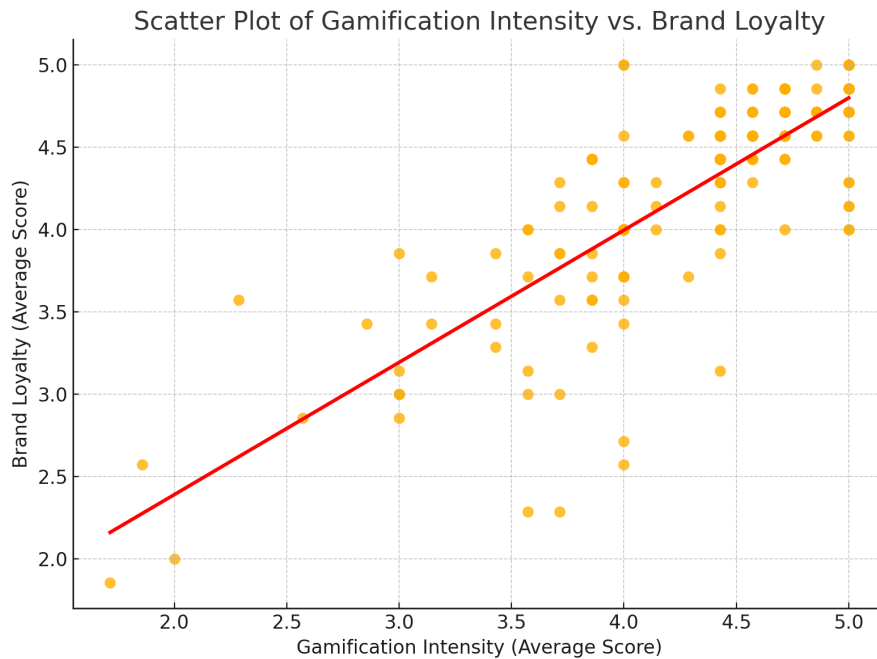


Figure 2: Scatter Plot of Gamification Intensity vs. Brand Loyalty

Figure 2 presents a scatter plot depicting the relationship between Gamification Intensity and Brand Loyalty among the study’s respondents. Each dot represents an individual participant’s average rating for both variables, based on their survey responses. The plot demonstrates a clear upward trend, as illustrated by the red regression line, indicating a strong positive linear relationship. This relationship is quantified by a Pearson correlation coefficient of $r = 0.81$, which suggests that higher levels of perceived gamification intensity are strongly associated with increased brand loyalty. In essence, respondents who engage more deeply with gamified brand experiences tend to show stronger loyalty behaviors, including repurchase intentions and brand advocacy.

Discussion

This study investigates the correlation of gamification intensity and brand loyalty among young adults in the Philippines. The discussion is a detailed account of the main findings concerning their relationship with previous research, and how those findings propose theory and practice.

Demographic Factors and the Gamification–Loyalty Link

The results clearly show that the overall positive

correlation of gamification intensity and brand loyalty is held broadly with respect to the different categories of young adults examined. The sample respondents were mostly male (68.2% male, whereas 30.8% female), yet both genders reported relatively equal rates of engaging in gamified brand experiences and showing loyalty to brands. This indicates that gender did not have a significant moderating effect on the gamification-loyalty relationship in our sample. Likewise, even though the age range was from 18 to 35, the majority of participants were Gen Z (60.2% were from 18 to 22 years of age). These younger adults, who were born into the digital era, were the most active in gamifying apps but, importantly, the small group of older people (the case of millennials) also reacted positively. Age subgroups did not differ much with respect to the correlation’s strength, which indicates that the impact of gamification intensity on loyalty is persistently positive for both Gen Z and younger millennials. This identical pattern of results conforms to the observation that both generations are very digital natives. Gen Z, in particular, is a strong advocate of interactive content and instantaneous applications on digital platforms. The urban-centric sample (93.5% from Metro Manila) further clarifies the scope of this finding – in the highly connected metropolitan areas of the Philippines, the use of gamified brand applications

is commonplace, which is why young consumers from all walks of life seem to be accepting these apps in equal measure. Even sectors like students versus the full-time employee (who comprised 63.2% and 15.4% of the sample, respectively) did not show divergent outcomes in terms of loyalty; the strong gamification–loyalty link was sustained regardless of occupation or industry. To sum up, our data imply that in this young Filipino population, the demographic factors (gender, age, location, and status) have no significant effect on the positive influence of gamification on the brand’s loyalty. This broad appeal strongly hints that gamified experiences created correctly have the potential to hook a large section of young target groups, a notion that is consistent with previous research that found gamification to be efficient across different user groups.

It is worth mentioning that the high baseline engagement with gamified content across the sample may reflect the culture of digital devices in the Philippines, especially the always-active of social media, and the wide use of apps. Over 93% of respondents participate in gamified brand activities sometimes or even all the time (58.2% “always,” 24.4% “often”), which leads us to the conclusion that the youngsters regard these interactive brand promotions as an ordinary part of their day-to-day life. This widespread exposure has made it possible for both men and women, and both Gen Z, and younger millennials, to be susceptible to gamification influences. The fact that there were no significant demographic differences in the loyalty outcomes perfectly fits the notion that younger Filipino consumers collectively are very well inclined towards using interactive platforms. As digital natives, they are more selective in their choice of brands by concentrating on experiential and enjoyable brand interactions as compared to just simple reading, a trend that is seen in both gender differences and across age groups. The positive, strong correlations between the gamification intensity and the loyalty is thus a general factor for the urban demographic aged 18-35 years rather than a special case situation. The factors in this study did not offset or elevate the effects; what they did was instead a blanket good response to gamification, which reflects the cross-cutting influence of digital culture shared by a community throughout the Philippines.

Effectiveness of Specific Gamification Features on Brand Loyalty

Our findings highlight that certain gamification features are much more effective in the engagement and loyalty of young adults. Particularly, the preference was mainly for simple reward-based mechanics: points collection was the feature that the most users had (utilized by 67.7% of respondents) followed by badges/achievements (34.3%) and “spin-the-wheel” luck games (29.4%). These most used elements have a common feature of providing immediate rewards, or tangible progress, which means they are relating to consumers’ quick gratification and a sense of achievement. The prominence of points and

badges is consistent with classic gamification models, which posit that points, badges, and leaderboards (PBL) are the essential drivers of engagement (Werbach & Hunter, 2012, as cited in Kanazawa, 2022). In our study, however, competitive features like leaderboards were among the least engaged (only 15.9% participation). This gap represents a clear-cut proclivity for rewards that are not competitive but self-progressed rather than in opposition to others. The information hints that Filipino youth’s loyalty is mainly enhanced by gamified features that make them feel competent and rewarded rather than those that place them in competition with other users. When viewed through the lens of Self-Determination Theory (SDT), this is consistent: points and badges fulfill the need for competence (by highlighting achieved and total progress), and they can also enhance autonomy by allowing users to proceed at their pace. These features offer positive feedbacks and a sense of achieving what was set, which essentially feed the intrinsic motivation, and the outcome is enjoyment. In contrast, leaderboards emphasize social comparison and competition which may not actually address the more collectivistic attitudes and harmony-seeking manifestations of this group. Studies have proven this cultural divergence to be correct – the Western audience seems to be favorable to competitive gamification, but artificial Southeast Asia consumers are in a preference mainly for the cooperative and reward-centric schemes. Our findings indeed show such a cultural trend – the infrequent usage of leaderboards and instead preference to the simple points system and luck-based rewards shows a shift away from the collaborative play to a more overtly participatory game type that is seen as fun, entertaining, and easy to follow.

How these gamification features are involved in consumer loyalty is clearly proven by the translation of these features to consumer attitudes and behaviors. The predominance of points (ranked #1) indicates that systems that turn engagement into immediate and concrete benefits (for instance, redeemable points or discounts) are particularly successful in boosting loyalty - probably because they resonate well with the value-seeking mentality of Filipino youth. This is in line with the findings of Caponpon *et al.* (2023), who noted that gamified features (like reward points and cashback challenges) on e-commerce increased user satisfaction and repeat purchase intentions. Respondents in our research showed that the preference to points and badges corresponds with them regarding themselves as people who, with the implementation of good gamification, are given rewards and brand respect by brands and, as a result, they would prefer those brands to other brands. These markers of attitudinal loyalty were very high (with means of roughly 4.2-4.3 on a five-point scale), pointing strongly to the fact that the features mentioned are able to create real brand loyalty, and not just a temporary user engagement. Besides, the referral bonuses and challenges/competitions had average participation (each around 20%), which showed that social-sharing incentives and skill-based challenges do

have a small but significant impact. Users who are more socially oriented or those who are looking for a higher level of engagement may find them more appealing, but they are not as effective as points in general for this demographic. If we link this to Flow Theory, components like challenges may serve as flow experiences for some users by providing the right amount of challenge and clear objectives, thus increasing commitment and loyalty. Certainly, the respondents agreed with the notion that gamified activities become more and more complex and rewarding over time (Mean = 4.23), which suggests that a well-designed difficulty curve helps to sustain attention over the longrun – a central aspect of keeping flow in an experience. However, the broad conclusion is that reward-focused gamification (points, badges, luck-based games) is the most effective in our context, likely because it achieves a perfect ratio between extrinsic rewards and intrinsic enjoyment. These elements offer life quality (solving the extrinsic, economic motives) while being entertaining and easy to grasp, thus they contribute to both the behavioral loyalty (by the means of rewards to keep using the brand) and attitudinal loyalty (by creating fun and positive experiences). This finding supports the successful gamified programs in the Philippines, where simple mechanics like daily check-ins, spins, and point accumulation are widely used for driving engagement. Our study empirically confirms that those very features correlate with higher brand loyalty in young consumers, thus validity is given to strategies by platforms like Shopee and GCash that focus on easy rewards and fun frequent interactions.

Impact of Gamification Intensity on Brand Loyalty

The main finding of this research is a very strong positive link between the level of gamification and brand loyalty among young adults. On a statistical basis, this association is extremely solid (Pearson $r = 0.81$), which shows that the perceived higher levels of gamification intensity are directly coupled with higher loyalty values. This scenario was depicted in the scatter plot (Figure 2) which indicated an obvious upward trend – individuals who are more involved in gamified brand experiences indeed show more inclination to behave loyally such as repurchasing and brand advocacy. In more practical terms, those who mentioned that the brands they use have highly immersive, frequently updated, and challenging gamification (high intensity) also were strong believers that they stay loyal to those brands, for example, by repurchasing and recommending them. In our sample, the average perceived gamification intensity was 4.27 (on a 5-point scale), which is within the “Very High” range, whereas brand loyalty score also was similarly high, as it was 4.22. The parallel status reinforces that the respondents who are taking the pleasure of overwhelming gamification are also almost equally well feeling loyal. In the instance, the specific loyalty indicators with the highest agreements were following/subscribing to gamified brands (Mean = 4.33) and likelihood to repurchase from those brands

(4.29). Thus, it looks as if gamified loyalty affects directly on repurchase - the users not only interact more, but they reward the brand by coming back for more. The current information fits very well with Oliver’s model of brand loyalty which explains the difference between behavioral loyalty (in terms of repeat purchases) and attitudinal loyalty (emotional attachment and advocacy). Our findings indicate that gamification can tempt up both of these types: respondents exhibited strong behavioral loyalty (high repurchase intentions and advocacy) along with notable attitudinal loyalty, like feeling emotionally connected to the brand (Mean = 4.13). The slightly lower score for emotional connection, while still positive, indicates that the attitudinal component, though boosted by gamification, leaves some room for further growth. However, the overall very high loyalty levels observed provide clear evidence that as gamification intensity increases, so does the loyalty of young adult consumers to the brand.

The robust connection of our results with the existing studies and theories enhances the credibility of this observed relationship. Positive impacts of gamification on engagement and loyalty outcomes have been reported in earlier studies worldwide. For instance, it was found by Xi and Hamari (2020) that gamification has a positive influence on brand engagement which in turn affects the overall brand equity. Our study expands on this knowledge by showing that the gamification is not only the possession of it but also the scale of it is a key factor - thus it tackles a gap in literature where gamification was often treated as a binary condition. In a similar spirit, Harwood and Garry (2015) reported that gamified loyalty programs were significant in increasing e-loyalty and repurchase behavior which was also the trend observed in the case of young adults in the Philippines: stronger gamification was associated with higher intent to repurchase and recommend. The data we provide strongly support the propositions of Caponpon *et al.* (2023) that gamified elements are influential in raising the frequency of purchases and brand advocacy in e-commerce, thus generalizing their findings also to other types of brand experiences. Theoretical explanations can be based on Self-Determination Theory and Flow Theory. The high level of gamification would probably mean that the experience is richer and more intrinsic boredom-free - indeed, the respondents showed that they find the gamification measures to be “highly immersive and engaging” (Mean ~4.27) and such features encourage them to do tasks. Thus, the heavily intense gamification (with elements such as constant challenges and dynamic content) fulfills users’ intrinsic needs of competence and stimulation, respectively thereby giving the empowerment to them for the voluntary interaction with the brand. As long an activity is internally enjoyable, consumers are more likely to form a stable loyalty because their engagement is not always driven only by external rewards. Flow Theory also gives an explanation to this: a gamified environment which is engrossing and continues to give optimally

challenging tasks can create a flow state. Consequently, in such a state, the users lose time, have fun with the activity, and establish a good association with the source of that experience - in this case, the brand. Our participants' firm consensus that gamified programs are bringing on the frequent new challenges and are fun and interesting along the time (means ~ 4.3) indicates to us that they do so flow often. As a result, the brand giving that experience will be the one that feels the impact of it through the increased loyalty, consequently. In sum, the literature and data all align for the assertion that increasing the scale of gamification is a very effective way to build the behavioral and emotional fronts of brand loyalty in the market for the young. This addresses the research gap identified by scholars like Bohné *et al.* (2023) as it provides quantitative evidence showing that different degrees of gamification significantly influence loyalty, especially in a digitally oriented emerging market demographic.

Thresholds of Gamification Intensity and Diminishing Returns

The fundamental question raised in this registration was whether or not a point in which increasing gamification intensity would yield no additional benefits - and maybe even model-back consumer engagement (i.e., a diminishing return). From our findings, there is no clear evidence of a downturn or saturating effect within the range of observed gamification intensity. Unlike this, the participants' answers suggest that multi-gamification is usually what improves or just remedies their loyalty. Principally, a big majority showed a readiness to get on board with even more gamified experiences: 79.6% said that they were "Likely" or "Very Likely" to take part in the new gamified brand program. This excitement for additional gamifying signifies that respondents didn't experience being "over-gamified" or burnt out; if "fatigue" had been there we should have seen reluctance towards joining new programs. Moreover, the respondents who had been engaging with gamified brand programs for lengthy periods have shown a high level of engagement and loyalty. About a third of the sample population had been deliberated to be long-term users. Their loyalty levels were just as high as those of new users, even though they had participated for just over a year. This extended stay of mindfulness has been mainly due to the absence of gamification fatigue appearing, even among the long-term users. The scatterplot of intensity and loyalty relationships also presented a positive linear correlation with no evident saturation effect in the highest intensity levels - even the participants with the most intense game ratings displayed high loyalty scores. Focusing back on these points, we did not observe a threshold beyond which the intensity of gamification started eroding effectiveness. Our findings are somewhat in contrast with a concern laid out in the literature about potential gamification saturation. Some scholars have hypothesized that there might be a point at which too many game elements or too intense of a gamification could overwhelm users or look

fake, thus reduce its efficiency. However, in this research, the levels of gamification as implemented by popular brands and experienced by our respondents were on the positive range. The users kept on reacting positively until the highest reported intensity, with no significant abandonment in loyalty metrics.

There are multiple possible causes of no observed diminishing returns. Primarily, the gamified experiences of the respondents may be impeccably designed and command a balance of rewards and challenges without causing frustration or boredom. The survey items represent that users see themselves funnily challenged and interestingly motivated by these features, suggesting that gamification hits a "sweet spot". As per Flow Theory, if the challenge level gets to adjust with the user's skills and does not get too easy or too difficult, the user remains in flow and does not get disengaged. The accompanying assertion of high enjoyment reported indicates that the gamified apps have largely accomplished such balance thus ensuring that there is no user burnout. Secondly, viewing this through the lens of Self-Determination Theory, it seems as if the gamification elements are being the biggest supporters of the intrinsic motivation than being the underminers of it. The significant danger of heavy gamification is the potential of it turning the user's attention to extrinsic (points, prizes) rewards to such extent that the intrinsic joy decreases - a phenomenon referred to as the overjustification effect (Deci & Ryan, 1985). Nonetheless, our respondents have once again confirmed their opinion that the experiences are immersive and fun just the way they are, hence, the intrinsic motivation is still high. The extrinsic rewards (points, badges) given are possibly the factors that keep supporting the joy of the experience without entirely hindering the intrinsic grade. In this way, users are not pushed back; they do not feel fooled or tired by gamification, but in contrast, rather find it as a facilitator to their brand interaction. Further evidence comes from the emotional indicator referring to the removal of gamification: respondents moderately agreed that they would feel disappointed if a brand removed gamification features (Mean = 3.98). Despite being slightly below other loyalty measures, this still-positive value shows that the consumers started to regard gamification as an integral part of the brand experience. Furthermore, the withdrawal of it would decrease their satisfaction, but since this score isn't higher, it supports that the game features are not the only factor for their loyalty. To put it differently, they appreciate gamification but have not reached a state of being depleted or completely driven by it yet. Their point of view is consistent with the literature, which points out that, within markets like the Philippines, gamification tends to lead not so much to heightened emotional attachment but to short-term behavior change (e.g., more repeat purchases and increased activity) more readily. It is that buyers need emotional connection, but that connection is not only based on the game. Also, it might be that additional relationship building is required. Therefore, we

didn't find any threshold effects, but the quality of loyalty (transactional vs. emotional) should be closely monitored. Also, brands should combine gamification with other strategies (value alignment, building a community) to ensure the customer loyalty remains long-lasting and is not only temporarily depending on rewards.

The study intra-empirically watches “more gamification” as the better technique for loyalty with no signs of diminished returns in user engagement or loyalty metrics at any point. This finding essentially counterpoints the theoretical risk of gamification fatigue – at least for the young Filipino consumer gamification remains a welcome and effective tool for engaging. It looks like the market has not yet reached the point where users get tired of the gamified experiences. On the contrary, the appetite for gamification is still very healthy, as seen by the fact that they are the ones requesting for the most new gamified programs to join. Undoubtedly, this does not exclude the possibility of a saturation threshold being present in other contexts or if the tactics of gamification are misapplied. Our findings suggest that as long as the design of the gamification concentrates on joy, on a balanced challenge, on meaningful rewards (which thereby cause intrinsic motivations), this can be intensified without ostracizing users. The Philippine setting, with its expanding digital ecosystem, might further signify that gamification is still perceived as something novel and fun, thus prolonging any onset of fatigue typical to mature markets.

Philippine Digital Landscape and Generational Context

This observation is particularly true in the case of Gen Z and millennial consumers. As stated in the introduction, the digital proficiency of Filipino young adults is amazing; they are among world's top digital users, spending on average 5.5 hours on social media daily and searching for the interactive and visually rich content. This inclination towards interactivity has created a new form of market for gamification. Our sample's lively reaction to gamified brand strategies can be taken as proof of this vicinity. The gamified features employed by leading Philippine brands (for example, Shopee's coin rewards, GCash's games, and various shopping “luck draws”) have conditioned the consumers to the fact that brand engagement should be both entertaining and lucrative. This attitude appears to be evident in the data: most of the respondents not only participate in this type of activity frequently, but they even look for brands which have such promotional offers. Culturally, young Filipinos tend to be collectivist and value harmony, which correlates with our finding that competitive gamification (like leaderboards) was less effective. Instead, the strategies that help users to enjoy the rewards without directly competing are better suited to local preferences. The predominance of Spin-the-Wheel games and redemption points in our survey outcomes brings forth the notion that Filipino consumers show increased responsiveness to direct rewards and a sense of “community win” where everyone benefits

rather than a sole victor which is more typical of a competitive environment. Furthermore, according to the literature, Filipino Generation Z and millennials are very price-oriented while also being value-driven in their purchasing decisions. Gamification taps into this by offering perceived added value (discounts, bonuses, exclusive perks) for engagement. Thus, the good return for gamification rebated in part because of the addition of the peripherals in a price-sensitive market making the brand more attractive. The exposure of the new feature economics clearly shows why points collection was the no.1 feature since it speaks directly to savings/freebies which resonates the most values.

The freshness factor and the fast-paced digital journey are other aspects of the local context. The Philippines' digital economy has been among the most promising in recent times, brands have been shifting to digital marketing and gamified marketing. Young consumers, for their part, have been adorable observers in this process such as a massive uptake of the gamified platforms in e-commerce and fintech. As the trend is pretty much new, gamification remains to be a vibrant tool that displays novelty and attracts customers. Many respondents declared they had lately only started using gamified programs for a few months up to a year, which is representative of a big group of the population, as these are common experiences not yet daily and habitual for them. This could be a potential reason for the uniformly positive reception – the sector hasn't had gamification long enough to permit significant fatigue to take place. Besides, the urban concentration of our sample which predominantly comprises Metro Manila residents has already exposed them to a hyper-competitive brand marketplace with companies rolling out new gamified campaigns in an attempt to divert attention. This competition not only enriches the quality of gamification (brands are iterating and investing in better game designs to distinguish themselves), but also results the strong loyalty outcomes we observed. Urban Gen Z and millennials possibly now see gamification as a standard feature in brand interaction. For them, a brand without any interactive or gamified element can feel less engaging or just plain stagnant. This mainstreaming shift in expectation that engagement should be enjoyable and participatory further amplifies the role of gamification in loyalty. If done well, it satisfies the expectations of young consumers, it entertains them, increases the gratification and gratitude of the brand. On the other hand, our findings have a minor caveat (emotional loyalty being slightly lower than behavior loyalty), which suggests that even though gamification is a strong brand tool, perhaps Filipino companies still require to build deeper narratives or a community around their products. Filipinos are youthful and want to play but they are also the ones that connect with brands that match their values and provide social interaction. Gamification can be the key to increase engagement, but in this context, the long-term loyalty will also be built by factors like brand authenticity, community belonging (perhaps through social gamification features), and stable value.

Overall, our study confirms that the Philippine Gen Z and millennial audience is very open to gamification and the contextual effect of the local digital landscape is to magnify the impact. The cultural gear for fun, rewards, and social sharing line up with gamified marketing to produce a strong payoff in brand loyalty when these strategies are in place. These findings can not only validate the theories globally in the country settings but also give the practitioners insights: entering investment in gamification - especially the kind that brings enjoyable challenges and immediate rewards - can substantially boost the loyalty of young consumers. Brands must note cultural preferences (for example, collaborative games over competitive ones) and continue to innovate gamification features to keep the experience novel. In this way, they can sustain the high levels of engagement and loyalty shown in our results, while at the same time work on converting that engagement into emotional commitment that lasts with their Filipino millennial and Gen Z customers.

CONCLUSION

Our research has quite clearly evidenced a strong positive correlation with the gamification intensity and the brand loyalty of the young adults in the Philippines, with a corresponding Pearson correlation coefficient of $r = 0.81$ which redistributes the doubt of the null hypothesis. One of the main arguments of this study is that properly gamified experiences, which include a lot of elements such as constant updates, immersive participation, and a simple but effective reward scheme, are the major drivers of the brand loyalty both in behavioral and attitudinal terms.

The reported gamification features in the various young adult groups studied which collected points, badges, and finally the interactive mini-games proved to be the most efficient drivers of user engagement. They are the ones giving the energy to psychological needs such as competence and autonomy, which were indicated in the Self-Determination Theory, and at the same time, they are playthings of consumers' desire for entertainment, ease, and instant gratification. This kind of combination between the motivations from outside the self and enjoyment from within oneself makes the implementation of gamification a special marketing tool.

Besides, the argument to support that the intensity of the game not just being present but also active is essential in fostering consumer loyalty is hard to be beaten at all. The level of gamification chalking out the cyclonic course, i.e., throwing in more of the complexity, less of the organization, and more of the design, emotional loyalty grows through this high rate of repurchase, customer's product recommendation, and emotional bonding. Yet, it is worth mentioning that no tangible returns have been observed because of the high level of the game played in the area. Hence, it is implied that gamification fatigue and oversaturation have not been identified as serious threats among the young individuals of the Philippines during the levels studied.

The exploration also emphasizes the effect of contextual

settings and customers' psychology on the efficiency of gamification techniques. Being deeply influenced by collective but digital natives cultures, Filipino young adults proved a substantial tendency towards gamified systems that provide cooperative or non-competitive rewards. This cultural interpretation is vital for marketing specialists trying to effectively localize strategies within the Southeast Asian region.

To put it in very simple terms, from the examination, gamification does not just shine as a short-term as a marketing gimmick but it is coming out as a framework that is in sync with the growth of digital space and the cultural propensity that comes with it. For companies desiring to further strengthen the consumer bond, especially in the Philippines, a market that is still growing, the development of variable, engaging, and culture-oriented games will for sure have a very positive effect on customer loyalty and the brand's value.

Recommendations

For Consumers. Young adults should be aware of how gamification influences their brand perceptions. Being mindful of reward-based strategies can help them make more informed, value-driven purchasing decisions, and avoid manipulative marketing tactics.

For Marketers and Businesses. Enhance participation and loyalty through the application of properly planned gamification techniques including points, badges, and non-competitive rewards. Prioritize personalization, regular updates, and simplicity, primarily directed at the urban and student sectors. Be vigilant for strains of fatigue in user interactions, and apply the conforming adjustments.

For Academia and Scholars. This research is a demonstration of the capacity of gamification in the marketing sector, and a means of propelling new theoretical models of development. Subsequent studies would involve tapping into and expanding the different psychological constructs involved, as well as the use of technology such as artificial intelligence and augmented reality in gamified branding.

For Future Researchers. Expand studies to include broader demographics and regions outside Metro Manila. Use experimental designs to isolate the effects of specific gamification elements and assess industry-specific applications beyond e-commerce.

Compliance with Ethical Standards

This research is ethically compliant as it was based on ethical principles that were strictly followed in the entire research process. This principle is mainly focused on the respect for persons, justice, and beneficence.

The study was conducted on voluntarily basis. The participants received an invitation to participate that was sent through an online survey with an explicit and cordial cover letter presenting the design and objective of the research. The researchers provided the students with the information that the research was about examining the

correlation between gamification intensity and young adults' brand loyalty. Therefore, only individuals who have already tried gamified elements of the brand such as loyalty programs, branded mobile app challenges, or online rewards systems were encouraged to participate. The research group made sure that the data collection process was in full compliance with the Data Privacy Act of 2012 (RA 10173) of the Philippines and the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) of the European Union. No personally identifiable information was collected. The responses were anonymous and were safely kept, the only ones to get access were the research team. The information gathered will be used only for research and will not be shared with anybody else or for any merchandizing activities.

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